

In the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0006] with the following paragraph.

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the assembled coupler lock of the present invention showing the shaft inserted into the lock body of the coupler lock and a key inserted into the keyway of the coupler lock;

Please replace paragraph [0022] with the following paragraph.

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the assembled coupler latch lock of the present invention, with a key inserted into the lock. Figure 2 is an exploded view of the coupler lock of the present invention. Referring to these figures, it can be seen that the coupler lock **10** comprises a lock body **20** and a shaft **30**. The lock body **20**, components that comprise the lock body, and the shaft **30** are preferably made of stainless steel, making the coupler lock resistant to corrosion.

Please replace paragraph [0026] with the following paragraph.

A housing cap **45** is also fitted into the cap opening **42** of the lock housing **35**. The housing cap **45** has a number of openings. One opening **80** is for fitting of the locking plate **70**, springs **74** and cam **60**. Another opening **83** is for insertion of the shaft **30** of the latch lock **10**. The housing cap **45** holds in place the components of the lock body **20** which have already been described. The housing cap **45** is held in place within the lock housing by any of a variety of means known in the art. In one embodiment, the securing means is a set of screws or rivets inserted through the lock housing **35** into the housing cap **45**.

Please replace paragraph [0028] with the following paragraph.

The coupler lock **10** is operated as described below. The narrow end **94** of the shaft is inserted into an opening in the device **100** (e.g., the latch of a trailer hitch) that is desired to be locked or secured. The shaft **30** is pushed through the opening until it cannot be pushed any further, normally at the point where the flange **92** of the shaft contacts the device **100**. The device is preferably a latch **100** of a trailer hitch **105**, the latch securing the trailer to a vehicle. A ball receiver **107** is attached to the trailer neck **105** and the latch **100** provides a securing mechanism. The latch device **100** is preferably in the closed position, meaning, in the case of a trailer hitch, that the trailer cannot be disconnected from the vehicle without moving the latch to the open position. After insertion of the shaft **30** into and through the opening in the latch **100**, the lock body **20** is attached to the shaft **30**. This is done by moving the lock body **20** to a point where the narrow end **94** of the shaft enters and is inserted through the shaft opening **48** on one of the sides of the housing **35** of the lock body **20**. The lock body **20** is designed such that the shaft **30** can be inserted into the lock body on either of the two sides of the lock body that has a shaft opening **48**. When the shaft **30** is inserted into the lock body **20**, the shaft extends through the shaft openings **83** in the housing cap **45** and through the opening **72** in the locking plate **70**. The lock body **20** is slidably moved along the shaft **30** until the locking plate **70** within the lock housing **35** is aligned and engaged with one of the recesses **95** in the shaft **30**. At such a point of engagement, the springs bias **74** the locking plate **70** into a position such that the edge of the locking plate opening contacts the bottom **106** and the vertical edge **102** of the recess **95**. Preferably, the lock body **20** is slidably moved along the shaft **30** such that the locking plate **70** engages with a shaft recess **95** that is as close as possible to the flange end **92** of the shaft. The coupler lock is adjustable for latches **100** of different widths since the shaft of the lock has multiple recesses **95**, each of which can engage the locking plate **70**. However, it is preferable if the lock body **20** is positioned at a point along the shaft **30** such that the locking plate **70** engages the shaft recess **95** that is located closest to the latch **100**. The tapered edge **104** of each shaft recess **95** provides a camming surface for the locking plate **70** such that the lock body **20** can be slidably moved along the shaft **30**, in a direction toward the flange end **92**, without the use of a key **39**. The tapered edge **104** of the recesses allows biasing of the locking plate **70** against the force of the springs **74** as the shaft **30** is slidably moved the lock body **20**. It is also possible to unlock the locking mechanism **50**, using a key **39** for example, and then slidably move the lock

body **20** along the shaft **30** toward the flange end **92**. When the lock body **20** is engaged in a shaft recess **95**, it is not possible to then slidably move the lock body **20** in the opposite direction along the shaft (i.e., in a direction toward the narrow end **94** of the shaft) in order to remove the lock body **20** from the shaft **30**. When the coupler lock **10** is so positioned, the latch **100** of the hitch cannot be opened and the trailer cannot be removed from the vehicle. Figures 5 and 6 show the latch **100** of a trailer hitch in the closed position and the coupler lock **10** attached, as described above, locking the latch in the closed position.

Please replace paragraph [0030] with the following paragraph.

An advantage of the present invention is that the shaft **30** can be inserted from either direction, thereby allowing the user to insert the shaft through the housing cap shaft opening **83** from either side of the coupler. This is beneficial in that the shaft **30** can be inserted from different sides and using different hands, thereby allowing for easy application of the coupler lock **10**. The figures illustrate the variable widths available and the ability to have the shaft inserted from either side.

Please replace paragraph [0035] with the following paragraph.

In another embodiment, shown in Figures 8A-8D, the receiver lock **10** includes a locking head **150** that receives shaft **30** along an end **152** of the locking head. The end **152** includes a protective covering **155** that is preferably an elastomeric material which snaps onto the end of the locking head **150**. In other embodiments the protective covering **155** is integral, is made of a comparable material, or attaches by some other means, such as affixed by adhesive, form fit, or secured with retention means. In one embodiment, the protective covering **155** includes an internal groove that snaps into a corresponding external groove in the end of the lock head **150** to be contiguous with a cylindrical outer peripheral surface of the locking head as shown in Figures 8A-8D. As shown in Figures 8A-8B, the protective covering **155** has a hole or aperture **158** that is sized to provide interference fit with the shaft **30**, thereby sealing the internal components of the locking head **150**. An aperture **58** is shown in Figure 8D as providing an interference fit with

the shaft 30. The protective covering 155 preferably provides a seal against the locking head 150 to ensure water and debris does not enter the internal portion of the locking head 150. When the shaft 30 is inserted into the locking head 150, the material of the protective covering 155 becomes compressed and provides a barrier along the shaft 30 as well as the locking head 150, thereby excluding water, dust, dirt and debris from the internal lock mechanism. As shown in Figures 8A-8C, the internal locking mechanism includes a lock cylinder 160 which can be operated by a key or other mechanism. The receiver lock 10 may include shafts of various sizes, an end cap 170 or a bent or radiused end 172, and an optional protective cap 174.